



# CITY OF LODI

## COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

**AGENDA TITLE:** Lodi Conference and Visitors Bureau

**MEETING DATE:** May 3, 1995

**PREPARED BY:** Finance Director

**RECOMMENDATION:** Authorize staff to begin negotiations with the Lodi Chamber of Commerce to form a Lodi Conference and Visitors Bureau and to return with an agreement for City Council consideration to contract with the Lodi Chamber of Commerce for these services.

### BACKGROUND


The recommendation to begin negotiation with the Lodi Chamber of Commerce is based on the attached Significant Expenditure Request which will be included in the 1995-97 Financial Plan and Budget. This request is being submitted early to allow the City staff and the Chamber of Commerce the time necessary to develop an agreement and statement of work for a Conference and Visitors Bureau by July 1, 1995. The background and objectives for this recommendation are described in the attached Significant Expenditure Request.

In concept this will be a three year pilot program to determine the cost and benefit to the City of Lodi. To establish a program of this size and scope, the City and Chamber must develop an agreement and work statement to insure that both the City and the Chamber establish a successful program. On an annual basis, the City Council will evaluate the program and determine whether the City should continue providing financial support based on performance criteria and a Statement of Work to be developed by the Chamber in 1995-96.

If this recommendation is approved by the City Council, a separate Activity will be added to the 1995-97 Financial Plan and Budget.

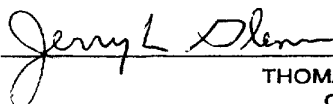
### FUNDING

The City will budget \$75,000 in the 1995-96 Budget Year and \$75,000 in the 1996-97 Budget Year for this Activity.

  
Dixon Flynn  
Finance Director

Attachments  
Significant Expenditure Request

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_



THOMAS A. PETERSON  
City Manager



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## **1995-97 Financial Plan and Budget**

### **SIGNIFICANT EXPENDITURE REQUEST AND STAFFING CHANGE**

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**ACTIVITY:** Promotional Development  
**REQUEST TITLE:** Lodi Conference and Visitors Bureau

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#### **REQUEST SUMMARY**

Sponsor the formation of a Lodi Conference and Visitors Bureau (LCVB) to improve the quality of life in Lodi for all residents and visitors and to promote (in a manner consistent with City Council goals) the development of Lodi as a regional business, recreation, conference and tourist center. This activity will be established as a three year pilot program funded by the City at \$75,000 in the first year. Over three years, the LCVB will seek additional sponsors to increase the size and scope of the program and to lower the level of the City's participation.

#### **PRIMARY OBJECTIVES**

1. Develop a comprehensive advertising and promotional campaign which will include promotional publications such as maps and informational brochures for City wide business activities, recreational activities, conferences and tourist opportunities.
2. Establish a Visitor Services Center to provide information and assistance to residents and visitors for special events, sport tournaments, local products, and visitor facilities (motels, restaurants, parks, etc.).

#### **SUMMARY OF FACTORS DRIVING THE REQUEST FOR CHANGE**

In April 1994, the City Council adopted an economic development plan to promote, attract and retain business. One objective of this plan was to "market Lodi as a tourist and business location". In adopting this objective, the City Council committed the City to focusing City resources to the development of programs to promote the tourist and business activities and facilities of Lodi.

Of the alternatives considered by staff, the recommendation made by the Chamber of Commerce appears to be the most acceptable. This would be a three year pilot program under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce. In the first year the City would fully fund the startup costs and provide for some growth in the program in years two and three. In the first three years the Bureau will seek additional support from other agencies and private business to expand and develop their program. Within one year the Chamber will develop a comprehensive statement of work for review by the City Council which addresses the qualifications of the staff, the specific approach to be used to promote Lodi, and the manner in which the program is to be evaluated. In concept, the City Council will be able to evaluate the success of the LCVB by measuring the increase or decrease in the Transient Occupancy Tax, the increase or decrease in sales tax from restaurants, and the number of sponsors.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. **Provide a Conference and Visitors Bureau with City staff.** This alternative could be accomplished with City staff; however, to be successful it would need the support of the Chamber of Commerce and other Lodi business organizations.
2. **Contract with another business organization.** Under this alternative the City will have to seek a more qualified alternative than the Chamber of Commerce which is acceptable to the business community.

## **COST SUMMARY**

	<b>1995-96</b>	<b>1996-97</b>
Additional Costs		
Staffing		
Supplies, Materials, Services	\$75,000	\$75,000
Minor Equipment		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>
<b>Savings</b> Contribution to the Chamber of Commerce	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>
<b>Net Cost</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>

Cost estimates were prepared by the Chamber of Commerce for 1995-96.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

With City Council approval, the City will prepare an agreement and Statement of Work with the Chamber of Commerce to establish a Lodi Conference and Visitors Bureau and fund the program in full, July 1, 1995. Over the next three years, the Lodi Conference and Visitors Bureau will submit the following annual reports to the City Council:

- An annual financial report
- The City's actual Transient Occupancy Tax Receipts for the current and preceeding two years
- The sales tax revenues for resturants for the current and preceeding two years
- The names of sponsors and their annual contribution
- Work Program Definition (Scope of Work)

## **LODI CONFERENCE & VISITOR BUREAU**

**I. BACKGROUND:** Four years ago the Lodi District Chamber of Commerce established its Tourism Committee. Operating with limited funding, directed by Chamber volunteers, and staffed by the Chamber Executive Director, here are a few of the accomplishments of the Committee:

- A. Operated the Visitor's Center at the Chamber office on Saturdays, using volunteers.
- B. Prepared and published (50,000 copies each printing) two editions of the Lodi Visitor's Guide funded primarily by paid advertisement.
- C. Joined and became an active participant in the Central Valley Tourism Association (CVTA) with the use of volunteers. CVTA represents Lodi at various promotional events and trade shows throughout the state.
- D. Joined the California Delta Chambers of Commerce, where volunteers have participated in promoting Lodi at a variety of boat and recreational shows throughout the state.
- E. Sponsored a Chamber Membership Breakfast featuring an address by the director of the Office of Tourism for the State of California.
- F. Developed relationships with the Office of Tourism and other tourism organizations in California.
- G. Provided visitor packets on Lodi to a host of persons attending special events, holding meetings, or visiting the community.

**II. THE PROPOSED LODI CONFERENCE & VISITOR BUREAU:** The Chamber now believes that there is a demonstrated need to create the Lodi Conference & Visitor Bureau, which would be directed by a full-time manager.

The proposed new Bureau would be housed in the Chamber office. It's monies would be kept separate from Chamber funds. The Bureau manager will report to the Chamber's Executive Director. The Bureau will be a division of the Chamber. In addition to the assistance of the Chamber's Executive Director, the new Bureau, on a contractual basis, will have limited use of the Chamber's bookkeeper/office manager and a staff secretary.

### **III. GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

- A. Develop a comprehensive program within the first year.
- B. Implement short-term and long-range marketing and promotional strategies.
- C. Expand sources of funding through private participation.

#### IV. CURRENT NEEDS:

- A. Community Calendar - Maintaining a year-round Community Calendar which would be published and distributed quarterly.
- B. Community Events Phone Line - Creating a 24-hours-a-day Community Events Phone, which would list in capsule form major activities occurring during the week/month in the community.
- C. Special Events Coordination - Meet with the leaders of the existing major special events, for the purposes of: (1) improved coordination and relationships, (2) cooperative advertising & promotion, (3) scheduling, and (4) determining what assistance might be required from the Bureau.

Here is a sample of some of the existing special events in Lodi:

- Lodi Grape Festival & Harvest Fair
  - Lodi Spring Wine Show
  - Field & Fair Day
  - Oooh-Ahhh Festival (July 4th)
  - Arts & Rec At the Lake
  - Cinco De Mayo Festival
  - Farmers Markets
  - Micke Grove Zoo & Park
- D. California Youth Soccer Association - Assisting the proposed new California Youth Soccer Association with registration assistance, lodging reservations, marketing, etc. CYSA projects that their 50-field soccer project when in full operation will fill motel rooms 40 out of 52 weekends in a thirty-mile radius.
  - E. Softball Tournaments - Cooperating with the City of Lodi's Parks & Recreation Department in bidding and servicing major softball tournaments now and in the future.
  - F. Conferences - Providing registration/lodging assistance to conference meetings at Hutchins Street Square, the Lodi Grape Festival Fairgrounds, or elsewhere in Lodi. Preparing and assisting local groups in bidding for conferences and meetings. Providing name badges, souvenirs, Lodi coupons, etc.
  - G. Visitor Training - Seminars and visitor training sessions would be held for employees of motels, restaurants and other firms who come in contact with visitors. Upon completion of the training each "graduate" would receive a VIP certificate and badge (Visitor Information Person).

These trained volunteers could also help operate the Visitor Center on weekends or be available when hosts or guides might be required.

- H. Out Of Area Promotions - Promote Lodi at a variety of regional, state and national trade shows.

A portable promotional booth has been proposed which would present a professional appearance, while being light and easy to pack and transport. This promotional booth could also be shared with the City of Lodi's economic development coordinator.

- I. Publication Projects: A directory of bureau services is needed. The Community Calendar would be published in brochure form. Additional publications can be anticipated as the sales and marketing program is formulated.

**V. PROMOTIONAL FAMILIARIZATION:** Developing a relationship with tour bus operators, travel agents and travel writers, and media. Informing key representatives of these types of firms regarding Lodi and its special events and points of interest that will generate additional visitors to the community.

- A. Tour Bus Operators - Hosting tour bus operators to FAM trips to Lodi. Informing these tour bus operators about Lodi, its special events, etc., should result in thousands of additional visitors coming to the community on a regular basis.
- B. Travel Agendas - A similar program would be planned to host travel agents in Lodi.
- C. Travel Writers & Media - Travel writers and selected writers from various magazines and newspapers would likewise be invited and hosted for an annual visit to Lodi.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE LODI CITY COUNCIL:** Authorize City of Lodi staff to begin negotiations with the Lodi District Chamber of Commerce to form a Lodi Conference and Visitor Bureau. This will be a three-year pilot program with a \$75,000.00 budget for 1995-96 Budget Year, and \$75,000.00 budget for 1996-97 Budget Year.